

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of improving a virtual colonoscopy comprising reducing an attenuation signal of a patient's stool to an attenuation level below an attenuation level of a surrounding colon tissue.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein reducing the signal comprises introducing a contrast media in the patient's stool.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein introducing the contrast media comprises orally ingesting the contrast media.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein the contrast media lowers the density of the patient's stool.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein the contrast media reduces the patient's stool to a density between 80% and 90% that of colon tissue.
6. The method of claim 4 wherein the contrast media is polystyrene hollow beads.
7. The method of claim 4 wherein the contrast media comprises cellulose.
8. The method of claim 7 wherein the contrast media comprises a preparation derived from sawdust.
9. The method of claim 2 wherein the contrast media stimulates gas formation in the patient's stool.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein the contrast media comprises gasogens.
11. The method of claim 10 wherein the contrast media comprises air inside a membrane.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein the contrast media comprises an air filled closed cell foam.

13. The method of claim 13 wherein the contrast media reduces the patient's stool to an attenuation signal between approximately -100 HU and -200 HU.

14. The method of claim 2 wherein the contrast media makes the patient's stool more heterogeneous.

15. The method of claim 2 wherein the contrast media increases a fat content of the patient's stool.

16. A method of performing a virtual colonoscopy, the method comprising:

administering a contrast media to the patient to reduce an attenuation signal of a patient's stool; and

imaging the patient's colon.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein administering a contrast media comprises orally ingesting the contrast media.

18. The method of claim 16 wherein the contrast media lowers a density of the patient's stool.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the contrast media lowers the density of the patient's stool to between approximately 80% and 90% that of colon tissue.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein the contrast media is polystyrene foam beads.

21. The method of claim 18 wherein the contrast media comprises cellulose.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the contrast media comprises a product derived from sawdust.

23. The method of claim 16 wherein the contrast media stimulates gas formation in the patient's stool.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the contrast media comprises gasogens.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the contrast media comprises air inside a membrane.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the contrast media comprises an air filled closed cell foam.

27. The method of claim 16 wherein the contrast media reduces the patient's stool to an attenuation signal between approximately -100 HU and -200 HU.

28. The method of claim 16 wherein the contrast media makes the patient's stool more heterogeneous.

29. The method of claim 16 wherein the contrast media increases a fat content of the patient's stool.

30. A kit for improving a virtual colonoscopy, the kit comprising: a contrast media that reduces an attenuation signal of a patient's stool; instructions for use comprising orally ingesting the contrast media a predetermined time prior to performing a virtual colonoscopy, wherein the contrast media reduces an attenuation signal of the patient's stool; and a package to hold the contrast media and instructions.

31. The kit of claim 30 wherein the contrast media reduces a density of the patient's stool.

32. The kit of claim 30 wherein the contrast media increases a fat content in the patient's stool.

33. The kit of claim 30 wherein the contrast media makes the patient's stool more heterogeneous.

34. The kit of claim 30 wherein the contrast media stimulates gas formation in the patient's stool.

35. A method of performing a virtual colonoscopy on a computer system, the method comprising:

accessing an image scan of a patient's colon; and  
applying an attenuation threshold that has a lower threshold than an attenuation signal of the patient's colon so as to isolate a patient's stool from the patient's colon.

36. A method of improving a CT angiography comprising reducing an attenuation signal of a patient's blood to an attenuation level below an attenuation level of a surrounding arterial wall.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein reducing the signal comprises introducing a contrast media in the patient's blood by means of an injection.

38. The method of claim 36 wherein the contrast media lowers the density of the patient's blood.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein the contrast media is microscopic air bubbles.

40. The method of claim 38 wherein the contrast media comprises fat-laden liposomes.

41. A method of performing a CT angiography, the method comprising:  
administering a contrast media to the patient to reduce an attenuation signal of a patient's blood; and  
imaging the patient's heart.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein the contrast media lowers a density of the patient's blood.

43. The method of claim 42 wherein the contrast media is microscopic air bubbles.

44. The method of claim 42 wherein the contrast media comprises fat-laden liposomes.

45. A kit for improving a CT angiography, the kit comprising:  
a contrast media that reduces an attenuation signal of a patient's blood;  
instructions for use comprising injecting the contrast media a predetermined  
time prior to performing a CT angiography, wherein the contrast media reduces an  
attenuation signal of the patient's blood; and  
a package to hold the contrast media and instructions.